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HALTWHISTLE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health to the
Haltwhistle Rural District Council
for the year ending 31st December, 1925.
(Survey Report)

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To the Chairman and Members
of the Haltwhistle Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

In accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health Circular 648, this report must be a "Survey" Report and is in the nature of a Survey of the sanitary conditions obtaining in the district and the progress or otherwise made on health matters.

The area of the Rural District is 96,333 acres and the population as estimated at the end of 1925, is 9,463.

The District is highlying, hilly with mostly gravelly subsoil and therefor possesses natural drainage advantages, with valleys of considerable beauty surrounded by heather clad hills, and large expanses of open country . The natural conditions are conductive to good health, apart from the fairly heavy rainfall, which will average 80 inches per annum, and to which may be attributed many of the catarrhal diseases fairly prevalent in the district.

With the exception of several small "pockets" of the coal measures proper, the outcropping rocks wholly belong to the carboniferous limestone series.

The chief industries of the district are agriculture, coal mining and whinstone and limestone quarrying, almost half the male working population being engaged in coal mining.

The Slaggyford, Gilsland and Bardon Mill districts are much visited during summer and most of the houses in these districts take in a considerable number of summer boarders.

Births The number of births registered during the year including transfers is 183 (90 males and 92 females) this compares with 200 during the previous year, and is equal to a birth rate of 19.23 per thousand.

Deaths:- 98 deaths including transfers, were registered during the year. This compares with 92 for the previous year.
The causes of death according to age, are given in the following tables:-

(See Table 1)

The deaths of infants under one year numbered 19 as compared with 13 in 1924, representing an infant mortality rate of 104.4 per thousand births registered. This rate is disconcertingly high. It calls for the most careful consideration. A table is appended showing the causes of death of infants under one year.

(See Table 2)

While the conviction cannot be escaped that some of this mortality is duewto practices which cannot be discussed in this report, yet considerable improvement might be secured by the institution of a Maternity and Child Welfare Centre, and mothers could be persuaded to take advantage of the advice and assistance, than provided at Hospital.

The zymotic death rate during the year was equal to .52 per thousand, there being registered 4 deaths, three from whooping cough and one from diptheria.

The number of inhabited houses in the area according to the 1921 Census is 2,008. Of these 1917 were occupied by one family, 84 by two families, and 7 by three or more families. 2106 families were housed in 2,008 separate dwellings.

The Rateable Value of the District is £88931. 12. 6.

The assessable value of the district is £60,082 and the produce of a penny rate equals £250. 6. 10.

The amount actually expended in Poor Law Relief during the year amounted to £1614.

Hospitals. There are no hospitals in the Rural District provided by local authorities. In Haltwhistle an efficient well equipped general hospital, known as the Haltwhistle War Memorial Hospital has been provided by public subscription, the building part of an estate taken over by the District Council for housing purposes, being leased to the Hospital Committee at a small rental. Maternity, Childrens and General cases are treated at this hospital, and very good work indeed is being done. It is a matter fro congratulation that the District Council have entered into Conferences with the District Councils of Alston, Brampton, and Longtown, for the purpose of jointly providing hospital accommodation for cases of infectious disease at Longtown, for the use of the inhabitants of the combined are. It is to be hoped that the Conferences will result in a [illegible] combined scheme. The existing hospital at Longtown occupies a most satisfactory site, is modern and up to date, and there is ample provision for any necessary extension. I trust the Council will not overlook the need of some provision for the isolation and treatment of smallpox occurring in the district.

Water Supply. In the matter of water supplies, the Rural District is generally well provided for. Public water mains carrying ample supplies from springs in the district are provided at Coanwood, Featherstone, Haltwhistle, Park Village, Hartleyburn, Henshaw, Melkridge, Plenmeller, Thirlwall and Thorngrafton.

More than two thirds of the population of the rural district is served by these public services, most premises on the area of the services having a private service laid on, and the remaining one third of the population is, apart from a few isolated cases, within reasonable distance of copious and pure public springs.
It may be that should further building occur the Council will consider the question of providing public water services in the Slaggyford and Hordley Terrace areas.

Sewerage:- Public Sewers and Sewage Disposal works are provided at Park Village, Haltwhistle, Hartleyburn, Henshaw (part) Melkridge, Thirlwall and Thorngrafton (part) and are giving satisfactory service in the several areas.
The policy of providing small schemes in the small villages and groups of houses, and the work already carried out at Westwood Millhouse, Towhouse, is to be commended, and while local industrial and financial conditions have not been encouraging during the past two years, I am sure the Council will pursue this policy and complete the whole of the works contemplated.
The schemes prepared or in preparation for the sewering of Slaggyford, Lambley and Greenhead, should be carried out as circumstances permit. The comprehensive scheme for sewer extension, and for the provision of modern sewage disposal works at Haltwhistle already decided upon should very satisfactorily provide the requirements of the area.
Again the Council is to be congratulated upon the purchase of Tarnfoot Farm at a cost of over £3,000 for the purpose of Sewage Disposal and Refuse Deposit. The purchase will provide the Council with ample facilities for disposal works etc., free from any vexatious restrictions, and should prove profitable even from a financial point of view.
In the whole of the rural area there are many natural advantages from a drainage point of view. But these advantages carry with them a possible danger and the discharge of sewer from individual houses or groups in certain parts of your district results in some rivers pollution.

Scavenging:- Very satisfactory provision has been made in practically the whole rural district in the matter of places of deposit for house refuse. In only one place could it be suggested that provision is lacking and that is at Park Village, Bellister. I understand that negotiations for a site there, are approaching completion.
The District Council undertake the removal of refuse, by Contract, in Haltwhistle, and the work is being carried out efficiently by the present contractors. In the villages in the rural district, the Council's Inspector has arranged with carting contractors for the removal of refuse on behalf of occupiers, when necessary and called for, and generally scavenging is carried out in a fairly satisfactory manner.
Places of deposit have been provided at Haltwhistle, Greenhead, Gilsland, Henshaw, Thorngrafton, Slaggyford and Coanwood.
The Council might with advantage pursue their effort to provide a place of deposit at Park Village.

Slaughter Houses. There are six slaughter houses in the rural district, and while, on the whole, all are cleanly kept and endeavours made to prevent insanitary conditions arising, some definite system of inspection should now be put in operation. There is no reason to suspect any sale of unsound meat but systematic inspection would give added assurance and generally tend to keep conditions and quality satisfactory.

Smoke Nuisances. In a district of this character there is little required in the way of smoke abatement. Occasional firing of chimneys in Haltwhistle is a somewhat objectionable feature, and the District Council might with advantage, take into consideration the question of securing the operation in Haltwhistle of certain of the clauses of the Town Police Clauses Act.

Rivers Pollution:- This department is receiving attention and improvements have been made particularly at Redburn in No. 2 District.
I am afraid the chief default at the present time is in No. 1 Sub district, but the additional Sewerage Scheme, which is under consideration will effectually deal with this.

Housing. Overcrowding still persists mostly in Haltwhistle. Few houses are being erected and, in view of the undertainty locally, as to the continuance of the mining industry on the scale hitherto obtaining, there is little likelihood of any marked improvement in building operations. I quite realize that little else can be done than to express the hope that future industrial conditions may not be such as will render surplus part of the housing accommodation already provided.

J. G. Close
M.O.H.

Estimated Population to June, 1925.	Births.		Rate per 1,000.	Transferable Deaths of non-residents in the District.	Deaths of residents not registered in the District.	Total Deaths registered in the District.	Rate per 1,000.	Deaths of children under 1 year.	
	Unrecorded Numbers.	Nett.						Number.	Rate per 1,000.
9463.	182.	182	19.2	3	3	98	10.35	19.	66.0

TABLE. 1.

MORTALITY.

Under 1 year.	19.
" 5 "	4.
" 15 "	-.
" 25 "	2.
" 35 "	4.
" 45 "	8.
" 55 "	8.
" 65 "	19.
" 75 "	20.
" 85 "	13.
" 95 "	1.
	98.

TABLE 2

INFANT MORTALITY.

AGES.	DEATHS.
Under one week.	7.
" three months.	8
" six "	1
" nine "	1
" twelve "	2
	19.

CAUSES.

Under one week.	4 prematurity. 1 Cerebral Hemorrhage. 1 Debility at birth. 1 Malformation.
Under three months.	1 Chicken Pox. 1 Inanition. 1 Whooping Cough. 1 Convulsions. 1 Pylorie Sten. 2 Broncho. Pneumonia.
Under six months.	1 Asthenia.
Under nine months.	1 Convulsions.
Under twelve months.	2 Broncho. Pneumonia.

Causes of Death in Haltwhistle Rural District 1935

Total:- All Causes. 54 Males. 44 Females.

		Males	Females.
1	Enteric Fever.	-	-
2	Small Pox.	-	-
3	Scarlet Fever.	-	-
4	Measles.	-	-
5	Whooping Cough.	2	2
6	Dyptheria.	1	-
7	Influenza.	3	1
8	Encephalitis Lethargica.	-	-
9	Meningociceal Meningites.	-	-
10	Tuberculosis of respirity systom.	5	4
11	Other Tubercular diseases.	1	4
12	Cancer Malignant Disease.	9	6
13	Rheumatic Fever.	-	-
14	Diabetes.	-	-
15	Cerebral Hemmorage.	4	4
16	Heart Disease.	6	5
17	Asterio Serelosis.	2	-
18	Bronchitis.	-	2
19	Pneumonia (All forms)	5	-
20	Other respiritory diseases.	1	1
21	Ulcer of Stomach or duodenuin.	1	-
22	Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	1	-
23	Appendicitis and Typhlitis.	-	-
24	Cirrhosis of Liver.	-	-
25	Acute and Chronic Nephritis.	-	-
26	Pusperal sepsis.	-	-
27	Other accidents and diseases of pregnancy and parturition.	-	-
28	Congenital debility and Malformation premature birth.	5	5
29	Suicides.	-	-
30	Other deaths from violence.	2	1
31	Other defined diseases.	7	7
32	Causes ill-defined or unknown.	-	1
		54.	44.

Factories, Workshops, Laundries, Workplaces and Homework.

1 INSPECTION.

Including Inspections made by the Sanitary Inspector.

	Number of		
	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Prosecutions.
Factories (including Factory Laundries.)	35.	-	-
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	57	-	-
Workplaces (Other than Outworker's premises)	22	-	-
Total.	114.	-	-

2. DEFECTS FOUND.

	Number of Defects.			
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. Inspector.	Number of Prosecutions
Nuisances under Public Health Act.				
Other Nuisances.	1.	1	-	-
Total	1	1	-	-

Year 1925.

Inspector:- James Doughty.

District of Haltwhistle.

Summary of Work effected.

		After letter or interview.	After informal Notice.	After Statutory Notice.	Total.
Sanitary Conveniences.	Privies abolished.	-	-	-	-
	Privies repaired.	5	-	-	5
	Privy Ashpits abolished.	-	-	-	-
	do roofed or repaired.	3	-	-	3
	Pail Closets abolished.	-	-	-	-
	Water Closets Provided.	1	-	-	1
	do. Repaired.	9	-	-	9
	Sanitary Bins provided.	4	-	-	4
	do renewed.	-	-	-	-
Drainage.	New Drains constructed.	6	-	-	6
	Drains repaired or reconstructed.	6	-	-	6
	Additional Gullies provided.	-	-	-	-
	Old Gullies replaced.	-	-	-	-
	Scullery Sinks provided.	2	-	-	2
	do Waste pipes repaired.	13	-	-	13
	do. do. trapped.	-	-	-	-
	Yards repaired or reconstructed.	-	-	-	-
Water Supply	Sources closed or discontinued.	Nil.	No. of Houses affected		Nil.
	New Service provided.	Nil.	No. of Houses affected		Nil

Rivers Pollution.

Cases detected. 2. Particulars:- Drains delivering on roadside near Runner.

Remedied. 2.
S. D. Works provided. Nil.

District Haltwhistle.
Population 9463.
Inspector James Doughty.

	Number of inspections during year	Number of Defects or Contraventions of Bye-laws.	Number Outstanding from previous year	Total.	Number remedied after letter or interview.	Number of Informal Notices served.	Defects remedied thereafter.	Number of Statutory Notices served.	Defects remedied thereafter.	In progress or being dealt with	Legal Proceedings.
Housing. Structural Defects.	45	11	9	20	11	5	2	3	2	1	-
Dampness.	15	7	2	15	9	-	-	-	-	4	-
Unfit for Habitation.	17	17	24	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Defective Spouting.	27	27	5	32	19	-	2	-	-	7	-
Overcrowding.	This is general as house shortage in Haltwhistle Township is very acute										
Nuisances.	5	33	11	44	22	-	-	-	-	8	-
Water Supply. Insufficient.	4	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unsatisfactory.		1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drainage. Foul.	12	17	5	22	19	-	-	-	-	3	-
Untrapped or defective.		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insufficient.		5	3	8	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences. Structural Defects.	55	37	7	44	39	-	-	-	-	5	-
Insufficient.		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Foul.		15	7	22	18	-	-	-	-	4	-
Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.	39	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Slaughter Houses.	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Workshops and Workplaces.	25	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insanitary Ashpits and Receptacles.	33	2	2	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ashpits improperly used.		2	2	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Offensive accumulation. Petrol Stores.	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals.	338	178	87	245	150	5	4	3	2	36	-

HOUSING (INSPECTION OF DISTRICT) REGULATIONS, 1910.

Inspector: James Doughty.	Total.	1	2	3	4	5
(1) Number of dwelling houses inspected.	175	215	70	111	27	52
(2) Number considered "unfit for habitation"	29	15	-	12	2	-
(3) Complaints as to unfitness by Householders	26	-	2	15	6	3
(5) Closing Orders (No. of Representations to L.A"	-	-	-	-	-	-
(6) Closing Orders (No. Of Orders made.	-	-	-	-	-	-
(7) Closing Orders (No. determined after repair.	-	-	-	-	-	-
(8) (9) (10) (11) No. of Houses made fit for habitation. ((a) After Informal Notice"	20	-	2	15	-	3
(b) After Notice under Sect.28.	-	-	-	-	-	-
(c) After Closing Order made.	6	-	-	-	6	-
(d) By L.A. In default of Owner.	-	-	-	-	-	-
(12) (13) No. of houses closed voluntarily. ((a) After notice under Sect.28	-	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Without Notice.	-	-	-	-	-	-
(14) (15) No. of houses demolished. ((a) Under Demolition Orders.	-	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Voluntarily by owners.	-	=	-	-	-	-

General Character of defects:- Principally dampness. Choked or defective drains.

Defective Spouting. Insanitary Closets and Ashpits .

No buildings of an obstructive nature exist in this Union, or anything in the nature of unhealthy areas.

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HALTWHISTLE RURAL DISTRICT.

DISTRICT MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Year ended 31st. December 1925.

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SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
as to
Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious Diseases.

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During the years 1921 to 1925, inclusive, there may be noted a considerable outbreak of scarlet fever of a mild type in 1923 and 1924. Infection was undoubtedly spread by the complete lack of isolation and the carelessness of parents of children suffering from the disease. Schools were closed but this did not in any way check the spread of infection as many children were so slightly effected by the disease that, in every stage they were running about and playing, with other children. In many cases the disease was not detected or reported until the desquamation period was more or less pronounced. Not more than one or two "return" cases of scarlet fever have been detected during the period under review and carrier cases are unknown.

In 1925 an outbreak of smallpox occurred, five cases being notified and isolated. Four of the cases were from one household and the fifth case had been in contact with the family and had undoubtedly been infected there. All enquiries pointed to infection having been brought from the Ashington Area, where smallpox was, at the time, prevalent, by a charabanc party with whom the head of the infected household had been in contact. As a result of prompt isolation, and the careful watching of possible contacts a further outbreak, or spread of infection was avoided.

In the three small outbreaks of smallpox which have occurred in this district during the last 20 years, there can be no doubt that infection was, in the first instance, imported.

Diptheria. Diptheria anti-toxin has been supplied free in the Rural District during the last fifteen years. Supplied are stocked by arrangement with local chemists, and is supplied to Medical Practitioner on authority from the District Medical Officer of Health. Owing to prompt treatment such cases as have occurred have been mild and have left no serious after effects. No infection of contacts has been observed.

No cases of Encephalitis Lethargica or trench fever have been notified during the period and the only cases of malaria and dysentery have been recurring war cases.

Regular and systematic examination of pathological and bacteriological specimens has been, and is, carried out, chiefly through the County Medical Officer for Northumberland.

There has so far, been no provision, other than improvised accomodation for the isolation of cases of infectious diseases occurring in the district though in December last, negotiations were entered into for the purpose of providing joint isolation hospital accomodation for the rural districts of Alston, Brampton, Haltwhistle and Longtown: and there is every prospect of a successful conclusion.

Schick and Dick tests for diphtheria and scarlet fever are carried out where necessary and recently the treatment of immunogens appears to be encouraging.

No vaccinations either primary or re-vaccinations have been preformed by the Medical Officer of Health, under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1917.

With regard to non-notifiable disease there have been occasional small outbreaks of measles, generally of a verymild type and there have been no after effects calling for particular attention.

Cancer appears to be slightly on the increase in this, as in other districts.

No cases of anthrax or rabies have occurred.

Cleaning and disinfection of Verminous persons and their belongings. Provision is made at the Greenholme Poor Law Institution for the disinfection of verminous persons, and articles of wearing apparel. Little or no use is made of the provision. It may be said that, in a rural district of this description there is little, if any, need for the use of this provision.

Disinfection of premises and articles which have been exposed to disinfection is systematically and efficiently carried out by, and under the supervision of, the District Council's Sanitary Inspector.

Disease.	Total. Cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths
Smallpox.	5	5	-
Scarlet Fever.	10.	-	-
Diptheria.	5.	-	1.
Enteric Fever.	-	-	1.
Puerperal Fever.	-	-	-
Pneumonia.	-	-	10.
Other Diseases.generally notifiable.	-	-	-
Other Diseases notifiable locally.	-	-	-

Age Periods.	New Cases. Pulmonary. M.	New Cases. Pulmonary. F.	New Cases. Non-Pulmonary. M.	New Cases. Non-Pulmonary. F.	Deaths. Pulmonary. M.	Deaths. Pulmonary. F.	Deaths. Non-Pulmonary. M.	Deaths. Non-Pulmonary. F.
0.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10.	-	-	1.	1.	-	-	-	-
15.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20.	1.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25.	1.	2.	-	-	-	-	-	-
35.	2.	3.	-	-	-	-	-	-
45.	3.	-	-	-	1.	-	-	4.
55.	-	-	1.	-	-	-	2.	-
65. and up.	2.	-	-	-	1.	-	-	2.
Totals.	8.	5.	2.	1.	2.	-	2.	6.

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925.

No action has been taken under these Regulations. Regular inspection has been made but no case calling for action has been detected.

Public Health Act 1925. Section 62.

No action has been taken.

Jas Glass
Hon. Sec.